

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-46 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 16, and 31 being independent.

Claims 1-46 have been amended. Applicants submit that support for the amendments can be found in the original disclosure and therefore no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-10, 14, 16-25, 29, 31-40, 44, and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,606,663 (Kadooka). In addition, Claims 1-6, 11-21, 26-36, and 41-46 stand rejected under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by the document “Unix Digital Security” (UDS). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of calculating an evaluation value by comparing entered handwritten signature data with registered handwritten signature data and determining whether or not aging of entered handwritten signature data has occurred on the basis of the evaluation value. Independent Claims 16 and 31 recite similar features. With these features, if a user’s handwritten signature changes over time, this fact can be recognized and measures may be taken to avoid the situation where the handwritten signature is no longer accepted as valid authorization.

Applicants submit that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features. Both Kadooka and the UDS document relate to updating of passwords and not to handwritten signatures. Accordingly, neither of those documents discloses or suggests the above-mentioned features of Claims 1, 16, and 31.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention recited in independent Claims 1, 16, and 31 is patentable over the cited art. The dependent claims are believed patentable for the same reasons as the independent claims they depend from, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and an early Notice of Allowance are sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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